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East Europe Report

POLITICAL, SOCIOLOGICAL AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

(FOUO 9/82)



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GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

CHURCH SEEN GAINING 'SELF-AWARENESS' THROUGH PEACE MOVEMENT

Hamburg STERN in German Vol 35 No 16, 15 Apr 82 pp 240, 242, 244

[Article by Dieter Bub: "GDR: The Cross With Peace--With the Church's Support a Broad Peace Movement Is Being Formed in the SED State--Party Leadership and State Security Service Intend to Suppress the Disarmament Initiative"]

[Text] On Easter Saturday, thousands of young Christians prayed for peace in Berlin and Potsdam. On 13 February, the anniversary of the destruction of Dresden, 5,000 young people met at a peace forum in Dresden's Church of the Cross. In Halle, 500 members of the Young Christians Movement marched through the city in silence after a church service. 1,000 GDR citizens have so far signed the "Berlin Disarmament Appeal" of Pastor Rainer Eppelmann: in the GDR too, a peace movement is forming--to the annoyance of the party and closely watched by police and the State Security Service.

As early as 1965 the GDR bishops stated that refusal of military service--a punishable action in the GDR--or the alternative service in the construction units of the National People's Army (NVA) are more in keeping with the "peace commitment of the church" than service with arms. One of these "construction soldiers" was Rainer Eppelmann, the GDR peace pastor. After learning the masons trade, Eppelmann was drafted in 1966 and was shortly afterwards sentenced to 8 months in prison for refusing to obey orders. At that time he decided to study theology. In 1975 he became pastor of the Good Samaritan Parish in Berlin-Friedrichshain.

Ever since 1979 Pastor Eppelmann has been organizing youth church services that were first attended by 250 people and now draw from 4,000 to 5,000 young people from all over the GDR. In songs, sermons and discussions the participants deal with topics that are taboo in the GDR: the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, e.g. was used to discuss the question of how the super powers endanger peace. In the fall of last year, the strongly committed pastor published the "Berlin Appeal." In it Eppelmann pleads for a zone free from nuclear weapons in Europe, the "withdrawal of occupation forces from the GDR and FRG" and the "neutralization of Germany."

But these demands oriented on the GDR supported 1957 plan of the then Polish foreign minister Adam Rapacki today seem dangerous to the SED leadership. In

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a telegram to the party basic organizations Erich Honecker called the Berlin pastor an enemy of the state. Rainer Eppelmann was arrested, interrogated for 2 days and released only after intervention by the church leadership.

The first signers of the appeal were likewise summoned to the State Security Service and their apartments were searched. But the shock effect failed to materialize. Up to now, 1,000 GDR citizens have signed the appeal. Their number is growing each day.

The political commitment of the Berlin pastor is suspect not only to the SED but also to many GDR church conservatives who, especially in Saxony and Thuringia, had avoided conflict and made compromises with the party leadership. In the church of Berlin-Brandenburg, too, Rainer Eppelmann at first found more opponents than friends, in spite of the fact that he does not want to be a dissident and spokesman of a new GDR opposition movement. He does not want the role of either the GDR critic Robert Havemann or of an underground church leader of rebellious GDR youths. If he lived in the FRG, he would have been among the opponents of nuclear power at Brokdorf and Wyhl, and one of the peace demonstrators in Bonn last October.

Rainer Eppelmann has become the symbol of a new generation of pastors, vicars and parish workers. They are the spokesmen for a Young Christians Movement that is looking for a new orientation in socialist society.

To this movement belongs also Guenter Wonneberger, pastor of Dresden's Weinberg Church. In the fall of 1980, his Young Christians Movement caused a stir with its demand for a special social service program (SOFD). The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Saxony and its Bishop Johannes Hempel tried to keep the explosive document out of circulation. But it was passed from parish to parish and became known to the public at the Dresden Ecumenical Conference last summer. During the following months, church leaders and District Synods received 500 letters from groups and individuals who were likewise in favor of a program for military service outside the National People's Army.

But party and government leaders brusquely rejected the demand for a social peace service program. Werner Walde, first secretary of the Cottbus Bezirk management, called the wishes of the SOFD followers "dangerous to peace" and "hostile to the constitution." And Erich Honecker stated that alternate military service has long been possible in the NVA construction units.

Nevertheless, the Dresden initiative for a peace service program had its effects. When on 13 February 5,000 persons from all over the country met at the first peace forum of the GDR, many of them wore headbands with the slogan "Make Peace Without Arms." And on their coats they had sewn patches with the slogan "Swords Into Plowshares." This disarmament slogan comes from the Old Testament book of the Prophet Micah.

Klaus Gysi, state secretary for church affairs, was annoyed to notice at a dance in Thuringia that these patches have meanwhile become "a regular fashion." Gysi requested that the church leadership prevent production,

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distribution and use of these patches. Gysi was afraid that peace initiatives disturb public order. They suggest that the state has an insufficient commitment to peace. The GDR leadership, however, will not allow any limitation of military power and its treaty obligations.

In about the same way as in the FRG, the GDR government directed a campaign against the supporters of the peace movement. Radio GDR called them "blind, deaf and hypocritical." The official FDJ newspaper JUNGE WELT [Young World] called the goal to make peace without arms "a suicidal illusion in view of the aggressive aims of imperialism." In the GDR DEUTSCHE LEHRERZEITUNG [German Teachers' Journal] writer Wolfgang Tilgner spoke out in favor of military strength and against disarmament: "Doesn't the formula 'Make Peace Without Arms' transform itself, as if at the hands of magicians, into man's total capitulation before the very real--because they are armed to the teeth--forces of evil?"

In a speech before the Volkskammer, Defense Minister Hoffmann explained the new and more stringent military service law by saying that the GDR needs both swords and plowshares. And an SED propaganda campaign for the National People's Army is directed specifically against the peace movement: "Peace must be defended--peace must be armed!"

At the same time, the government exerts massive pressure against young people wearing the patch "Swords Into Plowshares." In businesses, schools and universities it is forbidden to wear peace symbols. In the streets, police force pedestrians to remove peace patches from jackets and overcoats. In Rudolstadt young people were beaten up in the streets by officials--just because they wore the peace symbol. Students who did not remove the patches were expelled from schools and universities.

The Protestant Church reacted to this massive pressure by the government with unusual severity. A decision of the Mecklenburg Church states: "Orders against wearing this symbol of world-wide peace commitment destroy confidence and do a disservice to internal peace." Especially older church members are invited to become witnesses themselves and show their commitment to peace in public.

The Thuringia Evangelical Lutheran Church Synod says in a letter to the parishes: "Attacks against this symbol do not hit individual young people alone but the entire church. The church stands beside the young people wearing this symbol."

The Protestant Church in the GDR, which a year ago was still hesitant and indecisive, has found new self-awareness and a new political challenge through the members of the Young Christians Movement. A statement by the GDR Federation of Protestant Churches declares that: "The commitment articulated in the new peace movement has its roots in the entirely political realization that contrary to all hopes it was not possible to counter the ever increasing rearmament policies during the 35 years since the end of the Second World War with effective and corrective peace strategies. The system of preventing

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war through military deterrent as well as the concept of political detente are subject to progressive erosion."*

In the leaflet of a Dresden initiative, distributed last week, GDR Christians are called upon to oppose rearmament and confrontation: "I want peace without arms and force! I will not submit to ideologies but obey my conscience. I will not believe in enemy images because the enemy image conceals the human image."

*"Friedenbewegung in der DDR" (Peace Movement in the GDR), edition transit, Scandica Publishers, Hattingen, 12.80 marks

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POLAND

WROCLAW UNDERGROUND RESPONSE TO MARTIAL LAW REPORTED

LD211100 London THE SUNDAY TIMES in English 21 Feb 82 p 9

[Text] Since martial law was declared in Poland more than 2 months ago, the strength and determination of the outlawed Solidarity resistance movement have been hard to measure, despite the lifting of censorship. Now, from Poland's fourth largest city, Wroclaw, in Lower Silesia, comes the first authentic account of the clandestine response to the military takeover. Cal McCrystal reports.

These are extracts from the first full run of daily secret reports from a Polish Regional Strike Committee to reach the West. Smuggled out in a parcel, they are a chronicle of events observed by the workers in the remote university town and river port.

The extracts, from the underground committee's newspaper from day to day, show that popular support for Solidarity remains formidable, despite attempts by the martial law authorities to flush out all resistance.

--Issue No 18 (15/16 January): On 13 January, a Mass requested by the Regional Strike Committee was celebrated by three priests at Wroclaw Cathedral... One of the priests delivered a homily about Herod and his atrocities.

...Herod's people, he said, have gone through Poland, armed with pistols, seizing from their homes the nation's best sons... A collection was taken up for families of internees. The baskets overflowed.

...On 10 January at 10:15 pm ZOMO stopped a man in the street and asked for his papers. When he tried to take them from his pocket, he was hit on the back of the head and on the eye with a truncheon. An ambulance took him to the hospital.

...ZOMO people then visited him in the hospital and examined him. One of them said: "Oh, there's hardly any blood. He can't have been beaten properly." The beaten man had been on his way to work and had a pass. He will probably lose the sight of one eye.

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...On Poznanska Street two soldiers and a ZOMO were disarmed by the people of Wroclaw. They set the soldiers free but the ZOMO man was beaten up.

--Issue No 20 (20.21 January): PAFAWAG (Railway Works) was "pacified" on 16 December. This is what happened: At a meeting at noon most of us vote for strike action. At 1 pm we hear tanks approaching. A ZOMO column arrives on the bridge. Some of the intelligentsia leave the plant after the first appeal to "citizen workers." Others of the intelligentsia stay on with the workers.

Barbara Litwiniuk (perhaps a Solidarity activist) has a chance to escape but decides to share the plight of the others and stays. She sings and the workers join in the national anthem, drowning out the voice of the ZOMO officer with the loud-hailer. The production floor vibrates as ZOMO attack in a wedge, grabbing Barbara and threatening the workers. Voices call out: "peace, peace." The national anthem is sung again--never before has it come so much from the heart. A ZOMO officer threatens to use force. There is silence. We are made to return to our respective sections...We cannot believe what is happening.

...On 30 December, Franciszek Tyszko was returning home from the grocery shop, where he is manager, on Ruska Street. It appeared that he had had a drink. In front of his own door he was stopped by a ZOMO patrol and beaten up...He was taken to a drying-out clinic where he was hit twice in the stomach. This burst his intestines.

After many days of great pain he died on 9 January in the railway hospital. His family have been warned not to disclose the cause of death.

...In primary schools, the Militia and the Security Service question the children--even those in first grade.

--Issue No 21 (22/23 January): Roman Skawinski, lecturer in political and social sciences at the medical school (and a party member), was sacked after appearing before a "verification committee." On 12 January he was asked to declare his loyalty to the party. He replied: "In order to agree to this loyalty oath I would have to place myself on the side of betrayal, atrocity, falsehood and deprivation."

--Issue No 22 (28 January): On 27 January, ZOMO and the secret police "pacified" the Municipal Transport Service's three largest depots--on Tramwajowa Street and Grabiszynska Street (where Solidarity's Lower Silesian section had been formed). They searched all vehicles and offices. It is not hard to guess they were hunting [for] (Wladyslaw) Frasyniuk (a Solidarity leader). They consoled themselves by removing seven rolls of printing paper. They are tilting at windmills...Medical personnel who tried to help the miners (at Wujek Mine) were beaten by police. The report of the Department of Health in Katowice says: "During the action in the mines, intervention of the police affected medical personnel who helped injured miners. Five ambulance drivers and four nurses were beaten. Personnel were dragged from the ambulances even though they wore white uniforms. Injuries were inflicted."

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"From one ambulance an injured miner was dragged out and was seen being carried to the river...ZOMO and doctors fought each other for injured miners. ZOMO wanted to kill them...Ambulances managed to evacuate only seven dead..."

--Issue No 25 (14 February): FADROMA (Construction Machinery) Plant-- workers pretend to work. They tell military personnel: "We are too hungry, we have no energy."

...At Bialoleka internment camp, the prisoners decorated a snowman to resemble General Jaruzelski, with dark glasses, epaulettes, etc. (The Polish word, balwan, can mean both "snowman" and "retarded person"). The camp commandant noticed the resemblance and shouted: "This is Jaruzelski."

The internees said: "No, no, it's a snowman."

"I say it's Jaruzelski."

"Not so. It's a snowman."

The commandant then went into his office and consulted someone. He re-emerged, demanding that the snowman be demolished.

The internees cried: "But this is Jaruzelski."

"No, no, it's a snowman," the commandant said and threatened them all with solitary confinement and other sanctions.

One of the internees then approached the snowman, agreed that it was indeed Jaruzelski, removed the cap and epaulettes and with a swift blow chopped off the head.

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POLAND

RADIO LUXEMBOURG ENVOY REPORTS POLAND VISIT

PM041023 Paris LE POINT in French 1-7 Mar 82 pp 58-59

[Article by Radio Luxembourg special envoy Olivier Mazerolle: "Poland: The Street Is the Only Shelter for Freedom"]

[Excerpts] The Poles are suffering, waiting, conscious that 13 December was only a stage. Is it a stage on the way to neo-Stalinism or to a realism which is a rough and ready compromise between the needs of the Eastern Bloc and the population's aspirations? Nobody can answer that. In an interview published secretly Zbigniew Bujak, a member of the Solidarity leadership, states: "It is now impossible to assess the situation in order to fix a future course of action. We do not know whether we have to prepare ourselves for many years or a few months."

At present the repression in Poland is not brutal, although there are some exceptions, nor is it on a large scale. Many people who were arrested 13 December were only held for a few hours. Mistakes were made in assessing the number of internees. Today, the oppositionists admit that the government's figure (4,000 internees) is probably not far from the truth. That is both a great deal and not many. In an attempt to make me understand the difference from other periods, one of the people interned 13 December and released after a few weeks explained to me: "In Stalin's day people were killed as readily as they are interned in Poland today."

The trade union's action is being devised day by day at the local level. The central organization has been smashed and the few members of the national leadership who escaped arrest have no contacts. Since 13 December the militants have been trying to prompt actions involving the population without making them run too many risks. For instance, in Warsaw an actor who had rallied to the regime was prevented from speaking a single line by a frenzied audience showing sarcastic enthusiasm. Since then the actor has not appeared on the stage. In Sidwik [presumably misprint for Swidnik] near Lublin, the inhabitants openly turned their television sets toward the street at 1930 hours when the news was presented by men in uniform. In Warsaw the trade union is urging the inhabitants to all go out carrying big bags in order to make the checks less efficient by making the "searchers" waste time. Although very distrustful about the calls which led to the Gdansk and Poznan demonstrations, Solidarity has nonetheless succeeded

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in staging strikes. In Wroclaw many enterprises were paralyzed by a 30-minute strike at noon on 29 January to protest the price increases.

Some 50 clandestine pamphlets are apparently being produced in the country. "There were 4,000 during the war," a militant humbly told me. "That shows how much we still have to do." After the seizure of many cyclostyling machines these pamphlets are usually typed on copying paper and copied. In Warsaw, however, the NOWA clandestine printing works has succeeded in printing two books since 13 December and has just printed an issue of TYGODNIK MAZOWSZE (The Mazowsze Weekly). This newspaper, the publication of the Solidarity organization in Warsaw, contains in particular an article signed by a famous Polish writer and an interview with Zbigniew Bujak, chairman of the trade union in Warsaw, who is at present on the run. Bujak warns his fellow citizens against spectacular actions: "For the time being that would be pointless," he says. "The strikes in Wroclaw against the price increase did not change anything. There were already too many ineffective actions before December. They tired people. The result was that when there should have been a general strike after the proclamation of martial law it did not work. We lost the martial law battle. Today, we must work to have it lifted, show our rejection by constant resistance with individual actions and fight for the trade union's existence even with a limited sphere of action. Aside from that we will have to wait until the struggle can be waged without any risk of bloodshed."

Individual action, according to Bujak, is action like that at the Ursus tractor factory (his factory), for instance, with the workers preventing Polish television cameramen from filming scenes aimed at showing that everything is normal. I met with two Ursus workers. One criticized Bujak for his lukewarm attitude. "He is cut off from people and does not know how much we want and need to act," he said. The other understands the caution shown: "Several of our leaders have been arrested. Workers have been moved to different workshops. Others are being forced to follow political courses instead of doing their job. But it is true that most are working normally. In present circumstances organizing some action would be crazy. We must first restore links and spread information so that people know exactly what the situation is."

In the universities, aside from Poznan University, the rectors freely elected before 13 December are still in office. So far they have succeeded in preventing the expulsion of students. "Moreover," one professor, an active Solidarity member, told me, "the military seem to want to avoid deliberately provoking young people, whose reactions they fear."

The fear of terrorism does not exist only on the authorities' side but also within the trade union. Seweryn Jaworski, one of Bujak's assistants, has launched an appeal for calm in his cell. The students I met said they had no taste for terrorism: "Our parents have raised us to respect courage but also to criticize the mistakes made during the Warsaw Uprising in 1944. We realized that deaths are often pointless."

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The Solidarity national leadership members held at Bialoleka, near Warsaw, have been "informed" that their departure to a foreign country would not raise any difficulty. For one of them, however, the threat was more specific: If he refuses to play a role in the new trade union he will be tried for treason. Walesa, who is apparently isolated in a luxury villa and has grown a beard as a sign of protest, is still refusing to go on television and make the statement which the authorities and also the Church are urging him to make admitting Solidarity's mistakes. "If he did so, I would no longer believe him," a Lodz worker told me. "But he will not give in. After all, he nearly won the Nobel Prize."

The population totally rejects the authorities. General Jaruzelski probably does not want to be drawn into the spiral of massive repression. But how will he be able to overcome the disgust which he and his aides inspire? He is counting on an improvement in daily life. The price increases have made the lines outside Warsaw food stores vanish; elsewhere they seem to have grown shorter. That may make people more patient but it will, of course, not settle anything.

But the flame is burning in people's minds even if the rate at which it burns has been deliberately slowed down. "For 16 months we lived through our greatest national insurrection," a Solidarity leader writes, "and it was a bloodless insurrection."

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